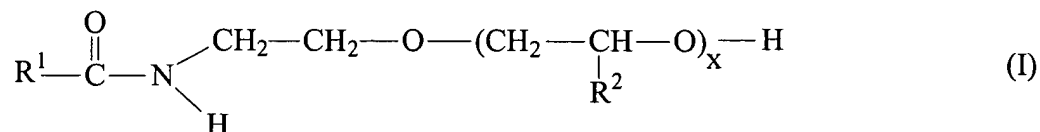


## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A liquid and readily flowable composition comprising:  
a) a room-temperature-solid solute selected from the group consisting of a nonionic surfactant having a hydrophile-lipophile balance from about 11.1 to about 18.3, a C<sub>8</sub>-C<sub>14</sub> fatty acid, or combinations thereof; and

b) an alkoxyated alkanolamide represented by Formula I



wherein R<sup>1</sup> is a branched or straight chain, saturated or unsaturated C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>21</sub> alkyl radical, or a combination thereof; R<sup>2</sup> is a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>2</sub> alkyl radical or a combination thereof; and x is from about 1 to about 8; and

c) optionally water when the solute is the nonionic surfactant;  
wherein the alkoxyated alkanolamide acts as a solvent to solvate the solid solute to form a homogeneous composition which is liquid and readily flowable at room temperature.

2. The composition of claim 1 wherein the nonionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of

(i) polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid esters selected from the group consisting of polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid monoesters, polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid diesters, and combinations thereof, wherein the polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid esters have a polyethylene oxide moiety corresponding to the formula of -(OCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>, where n is from about 5 to about 200, and have a carboxylic acid moiety from about 8 to about 30 carbon atoms;

(ii) ethoxylated fatty alcohols having an ethylene oxide moiety corresponding to the formula of -(OCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>, where m is from about 5 to about 150, and have a fatty alcohol moiety from about 6 to about 30 carbon atoms;

(iii) poloxamers that are block polymers of ethylene oxide and propylene oxide having from about 15 to about 100 moles of ethylene oxide and from about 15 to about 70 moles of propylene oxide;

- (iv) alkyl polysaccharides having a hydrophobic group with about 6 to about 30 carbon atoms; or
- (v) combinations thereof.

3. The composition of claim 2 wherein the alkoxyated alkanolamide is selected from the group consisting propoxylated hydroxyethyl isostearamide, propoxylated hydroxyethyl caprylamide, propoxylated hydroxyethyl cocamide, propoxylated hydroxyethyl soyamide, and combinations thereof.

4. The composition of claim 1 wherein (i) the nonionic surfactant is a polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid diester having a polyethylene oxide moiety corresponding to the formula of  $-(OCH_2CH_2)_n$ , where n is from about 5 to about 200, and having a carboxylic acid moiety from about 8 to about 30 carbon atoms, and (ii) the alkoxyated alkanolamide includes propoxylated hydroxyethyl isostearamide in combination with propoxylated hydroxyethyl caprylamide, propoxylated hydroxyethyl cocamide, and combinations thereof.

5. The composition of claim 4 wherein the addition of the composition into a cleansing formulation increases viscosity of the cleansing formulation to a greater viscosity than for similar weight additions of unsolvated polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid diesters into the cleansing formulation.

6. The composition of claim 1 wherein

(a) the nonionic surfactant solute is selected from the group consisting of

(i) polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid monoesters, polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid diesters, and combinations thereof, wherein the polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid esters have a polyethylene oxide moiety corresponding to the formula of  $-(OCH_2CH_2)_n$ , where n is from about 8 to about 150, and have a carboxylic acid moiety from about 16 to about 18 carbon atoms;

(ii) ethoxylated fatty alcohols having an ethylene oxide moiety corresponding to the formula of  $-(OCH_2CH_2)_m$ , where m is from about 7 to about 21, and have a fatty alcohol moiety from about 10 to about 19 carbon atoms; or

(iii) combinations thereof; and

(b) the C<sub>8</sub>-C<sub>14</sub> fatty acid is a carboxylic fatty acid of the formula R<sup>3</sup>COOH where a mean average R<sup>3</sup> is from about 12 to about 14 carbon atoms, which can be saturated or unsaturated.

7. The composition of claim 1 wherein (i) the nonionic surfactant solute is a combination of polyoxyethylene (20) isohexadecyl ether and polyoxyethylene (23) lauryl ether; and (ii) the alkoxyated alkanolamide includes propoxylated hydroxyethyl isostearamide in combination with propoxylated hydroxyethyl caprylamide, propoxylated hydroxyethyl cocamide, and combinations thereof.

8. A method for solvating a composition which is solid at room temperature, comprising:

a) providing a room-temperature-solid solute selected from the group consisting of a nonionic surfactant having a hydrophile-lipophile balance from about 11.1 to about 18.3, a C<sub>8</sub>-C<sub>14</sub> fatty acid, or combinations thereof;

b) selecting an alkoxyated alkanolamide which is liquid at room temperature;

c) combining the solute, optionally the water, and the alkoxyated alkanolamide;

d) heating the mixture to a temperature greater than the pour point of the solute to liquefy the solid; and

(e) maintaining temperature of the mixture and stirring until a homogeneous liquid composition is achieved.

9. The method of claim 8 further including the step of cooling the combined liquefied solute and alkoxyated alkanolamide composition to room temperature to form a room-temperature, homogenous liquid composition.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the alkoxyated alkanolamide is selected from the group consisting of propoxylated hydroxyethyl isostearamide, propoxylated hydroxyethyl

caprylamide, propoxylated hydroxyethyl cocamide, propoxylated hydroxyethyl soyamide, and combinations thereof.

11. A method of thickening a cleansing formulation comprising:  
adding a liquid and solvated thickening composition into the formulation, wherein the solvated thickening composition comprises:

(a) a solvent comprising a propoxylated hydroxyethyl isostearamide in combination with a propoxylated hydroxyethyl caprylamide, a propoxylated hydroxyethyl cocamide, and combinations thereof;

(b) a solute comprising a room-temperature-solid nonionic surfactant comprising polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid diesters having a polyethylene oxide moiety corresponding to the formula of  $(\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_2)_n$ , where  $n$  is from about 5 to about 200, and having a carboxylic acid moiety from about 8 to about 30 carbon atoms and having a hydrophile-lipophile balance from about 11.1 to about 18.3; and

(c) water;

wherein the solvated thickening composition is a homogeneous liquid at room temperature.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the step of adding the solvated thickening composition is performed at room temperature.

13. The method of claim 11 wherein the addition of the solvated thickening composition increases viscosity of the cleansing formulation to a greater extent than by the addition of similar weight amounts of a similar polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid diester.

14. The method of claim 11 wherein the cleansing formulation is a shampoo.

15. A baby shampoo comprising:

(i) a room-temperature liquid and solvated thickening composition comprising:

(a) a solvent comprising a propoxylated hydroxyethyl isostearamide in combination with a propoxylated hydroxyethyl caprylamide, a propoxylated hydroxyethyl cocamide, and combinations thereof;

(b) a solute comprising a room-temperature-solid nonionic surfactant comprising polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid diesters having a polyethylene oxide moiety corresponding to the formula of  $(\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_2)_n$ , where  $n$  is from about 5 to about 200, and having a carboxylic acid moiety from about 8 to about 30 carbon atoms and having a hydrophile-lipophile balance from about 11.1 to about 18.3; and

(c) water;

(ii) an anionic surfactant;

(iii) a betaine;

(iv) a nonionic surfactant; and

(v) optionally, an amphoteric surfactant.

16. The baby shampoo of claim 15 wherein the anionic surfactant is present from about 2 to about 5 weight percent on a total shampoo basis; the betaine is present from about 3 to about 6 weight percent on a total shampoo basis; the nonionic surfactant is present from about 6 to about 10 weight percent on a total shampoo basis; and the amphoteric surfactant is present from about 0 to about 5 weight percent on a total shampoo basis.

17. An adult shampoo comprising:

(i) a room-temperature liquid and solvated thickening composition comprising:

(a) a solvent comprising a propoxylated hydroxyethyl isostearamide in combination with a propoxylated hydroxyethyl caprylamide, a propoxylated hydroxyethyl cocamide, and combinations thereof;

(b) a solute comprising a room-temperature-solid nonionic surfactant comprising polyalkylene oxide carboxylic acid diesters having a polyethylene oxide moiety corresponding to the formula of  $(\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_2)_n$ , where  $n$  is from about 5 to about 200, and having a carboxylic acid moiety from about 8 to about 30 carbon atoms and having a hydrophile-lipophile balance from about 11.1 to about 18.3; and

(c) water;

- (ii) an anionic surfactant;
- (iii) a betaine;
- (iv) a nonionic surfactant; and
- (v) optionally, a cationic surfactant.

18. The adult shampoo of claim 17 wherein the anionic surfactant is present from about 6 to about 15 weight percent on a total shampoo basis; the betaine is present from about 2 to about 6 weight percent on a total shampoo basis; the nonionic surfactant is present from about 1 to about 4 weight percent on a total shampoo basis; and the cationic surfactant is present from about 0 to about 1 weight percent on a total shampoo basis.